

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action incorporates an Examiner's Amendment and Reasons For Allowance.

2. The Applicant's response to the last Office Action, filed 11/18/2008 has been entered and made of record.

3. The application has pending claim(s) 1-10.

4. In response to the amendments filed on 11/18/2008:

The Applicant alleges in page 6 [in regards to the 35 U.S.C. 101 rejection in the Examiner's Non-Final Office Action dated 8/19/2008] that the color correction module is directed to an apparatus and therefore claim 1 recites hardware components [module] and that the color correction module is not directed towards functional descriptive material per se [software]. The Examiner withdraws the 35 U.S.C. 101 rejections because the Applicant has clearly indicated on record stated that this module is the disclosed hardware component and not the disclosed software component.

5. Applicant's arguments, see "In response to the rejection of Claims 1 and 3-10 ..." in page 6 through "Accordingly, Applicant's respectively submit that amended independent ..." in page 9, filed 11/18/2008, with respect to claims 1-10 have been fully considered and are persuasive. The 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 103(a) rejections of claims 1-10 has been withdrawn.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

6. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Derek Benke on February 12, 2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

For claim 9 on page 4 of the Applicant's Amendment/Reconsideration After Non-Final dated 11/18/2008:

1. Please further amend claim 9 as shown by the attached pages.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): A method of digital image processing for applying pixel-based color correction to an input image of a digital image processing device to generate an output image, said method comprising the steps of:

providing two or more color correction processes of the digital image processing device each having a respective associated locus in a color space and a respective associated color mapping operation;

arranging said color correction processes of the digital image processing device as a succession of processes so that results of a color correction process form an input to a next such process in said succession; and

detecting, in each color correction process of the digital image processing device, whether each pixel lies within said respective locus in color space and, if so, to apply said color mapping operation to the pixel,

wherein once a first color correction process is performed by the digital image processing device on a particular pixel, each additional color correction process of said two or more color correction processes with respect to the particular pixel is limited to an extent dependent on a degree by which previous color correction processes in the sequence were applied thereby inhibiting color mapping in respect of loci associated with the previous color correction processes in the sequence.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

7. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Independent claims 1, 9 and 10 are allowable over the prior art of record. Claims 2-8 depend from claim 1 respectively, therefore, are allowed.

Independent claims 1, 9 and 10 each recite respectively the limitations of: wherein once a first color correction process is performed on a particular pixel, each additional color correction process of said two or more color correction processes with respect to the particular pixel is limited to an extent dependent on a degree by which previous color correction processes in the sequence were applied thereby inhibiting color mapping in respect of loci associated with the previous color correction processes in the sequence.

The combination of these features as cited in the claims in combination with the other limitations of the claims, are neither disclosed nor suggested by the prior art of record.

The closest reference of Rai (EP 0 947 956 A2) discloses color correction processes using the alpha mixing. However, Rai does not teach the limitations cited above.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bernard Krasnic whose telephone number is (571) 270-1357. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thur 8:00am-4:00pm and every other Friday 8:00am-3:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jingge Wu can be reached on (571) 272-7429. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Jingge Wu/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2624
Bernard Krasnic
February 12, 2009